AT THE CROSSING.

DR. TALMACE'S CREAT SERMON PREACHED AT DETROIT.

The Great March of the Children of Israel-"And the Priests That Bare Stood Firm on Dry Ground."

DETROIT, March 12 .- The Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is now visiting this city, preached to-day in the Fort Street Presbyterian Church, of which the Rev. Dr. Radcliffe is pastor, to a large and intensely interested audience on the "Crossing of the Jordan by the Children of Isrnel." the text being from Joshua 3: 17: "And the priests that bare the ark of the Covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed elean over Jordan."

Washington crossed the Delaware when crossing was pronounced impossible, but he did it by bont. Xerxes crossed the Hellespont, with two millions of men, but he did it by bridge. The Israelites crossed the Red Sca; but the same orchestra that celebrated the deliverance of the one army, sounded the strangulation of the other. This Jordanic passage differs from them all. There was no sacrifice of human lifenot so much as the loss of a Enchpia. The vanguard of the host, made up of priests, advanced until they put their Oh, could we make our doubts removebot at the brim of the river, when imdiately the streets of Jerusalem were core dry than the bed of that river. as if all the water had been off, and then the dampness drawn nau soaked up with a sponge and then by a towel the road had been wiped dry. Yonder goes a great army of Israelites, the host. in uniform; following them the wives, the children, the flocks, the herds. The people look up at the crystalline wall of the Jordan as they pass, and think what an awful disaster would come to them if before they got to the opposite bank of that Ajalon wall, that wall should fall on them; and the thought makes the mothers hug their children close to their hearts as they swiften their pace. Quick, now; get them all up on the banks, the armed warriers, the wives and children, flocks and herds, and let the wonderful Jordanie passage be completed forever.

Sitting on the shelved limestone, I look off upon that Jordan where Joshua crossed under the triumphal arch of the rainbow woven out of the spray; the river which afterward became the baptistry where Christ was sprinkled or plunged; the rivers where the axethe borrowed axe-mira ulously swam at the prophet's order; the river illustrious in the history of the world for heroic faith and omnipotent deliverance, and typical of scenes yet to transpire in your life and mine-scenes enough to make us, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, tingle with infinite gladness.

Standing on the scene of that affrighted, fugitive river Jordan, I learn for myself and for you, first, that obstacles, when they are touched, vanish, The text says that when these priests came down and touched the wateredge of the water with their feet-the water parted. They did not wade in chin deep, or knee deep, or ankle deep, but as soon as their feet touched the water it vanished. And it makes me think that almost all the obstacles of life need only be approached in order to be conquered. Difficulties but touched vanish. It is the trouble, the difficulty, the obstacle far in the distance that seems so huge and tremend-

The apostles Paul and John seemed to dislike cross dogs, for the apostle Paul tells us in Philippians, "Reware of dogs;" and John seems to shut the gate of heaven against all the canine species when he says, "Without are dogs." But I have been told that when those animals are furious, if they come at you if you will keep your eye on them and advance upon them they will retreat. Whether that be so or not I can not tell; but I do know that the vast majority of the misfortunes and trials and disasters of your life that hound your steps, if you can only get your eye on them, and keep your eye on them, and advance upon them, and cry 'Begone!" they will sink and cower.

There is a beautiful tradition among the American Indians that Manitou was traveling in the invisible world, and one day he came to a barrier of brambles and sharp thorns, which forbade his going on, and there was a wild beast glaring at him from the thicket: but, as he determined to go on his way, he did pursue it, and those brambles were found to be only phantoms, and that beast was found to be a powerless ghost, and the impassable river that forbade him rushing to embrace the Yaratilda proved to be only a phantom river. Well, my friends. fact is there are a great many things that look terrible across our pathway, which, when we advance on them, are only the phantoms, only the apparitions, only the deluas of life. Difficulties touched are ed. Put your feet into the m of the water, and Jordan retreats, mes see a great duty to per-

upon it, Jordan will vanish.

I always sigh before I begin to preach, at the greatness of the undertaking, but as soon as I start it becomes to me an exhilaration. And any duty undertaken with a confident spirit becomes a pleasure, and the higher the duty the higher the pleasure. Difficulthe Ark of the Covenant of the Lord ties touched are conquered. There are a great many people who are afraid of death in the future. Good John Livingston once, on a sloop coming from Elizabethport to New York, was dreadfully frightened, because he thought he was going to be drowned as a sudden gust came up. People were surprised at him. If any man in all the world was ready to die. It was good John Livingston. So there are now a great many good people who shudder in passing a graveyard, and they hardly dare think of Canaan because of the Jordan that intervenes: but once they are down on a sick-bed, then all their fears are gone; the waters of death dashing on the beach are like the mellow voice of ocean shells-they smell of the blossoms of the tree of life: the music of the heavenly chair comes stealing over the waters, and to cross now is only a pleasant sail. How long the beat is coming Come. Lord Jesus, come quickly. Chris the Priest advances ahead, and the dving Christian goes over dry-shod on paths of pearl.

> Those gloomy doubts that rise, And view the Canaan that we love With unbeclouded eyes!

Could we but climb where Moses stood, And view the landscape o'er. Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood Could fright us from the shore.

Again, this Jordanie passage teaches me the completeness of everything that God does. When God put an invisible dain across Jordan, and it was halted, it would have been natural you would have supposed, for the water to have overflowed the region all around about. and that great devastation would have taken place. But when God put the dam in front of the river, he put a dam on the other side of the river, so that, according to the text, the water halted and reared and stood there, and not overflowing the surrounding country. Oh. the completeness of

everything that God does! If God makes a Bible, it is a complete Bible. Standing amid the dreadful and delightful truths, you seem to be it the midst of an orchestra where the wailings over sins, and the rejoicings over pardon, and the martial strains of victory make the chorus like an anthem of eternity. This Book seems to you the ocean of truth. on every wave of which Christ walkssometimes in the darkness of prophecy. again in the splendors with which he walks on Galilee. In this Book, apostle answers to prophet. Paul to Isaiah. Revelation to Genesis-glorious light, turning midnight sorrow into the midnoon joy, dispersing every fog. nushing every tempest. Take this Book: it is the kiss of God on the soul of lost man. Perfect Bible, complete, Bible! No man has ever proposed any

improvement. God provided a Savior; he is a complete Savior-God-man-Divinity and humanity united in the same person. He set up the starry pillars of the universe and the towers of light. He planted the cedars and the heavenly Lebanon. He struck out of the rock the rivers of life, singing under the trees, singing under the thrones. He quarried the sardonyx and crystal, and the topaz of the heavenly wall. He put down the jasper for the foundation, and heaped up the amethyst for the capital, and swung the twelve gates which are twelve pearls, in one instant he thought out a universe; and yet he became a child, crying for his mother, feeling along the sides of the manger, learning to walk. Omnipotence sheathed in the muscle and flesh of a child's arm; Omniscience strung in the optic nerve of a child's eye; infinite love beating in a child's heart; a great God appearing in the form of a a child 1 year old, when 5 years old, 15 years old. While all the heavens were ascribing to him glory and honor and power on earth, men said: "Who is this fellow?" While all the heavenly hosts, with folded wing about their faces, bowed down before him, crying "Holy, holy!" on earth they denounced him as a blasphemer and a sot. Rocked in a boat on Gennesaret, and yet he it is that undirked the lightning from the stormcloud, and dismasted Lebanon of its forests and holds the five oceans on the tip of his finger, as a leaf holds the raindrop. Oh, the coming Savior, rubbing his hand over the place where we have the pain, yet the stars of heaven the adorning gems of his right hand. Holding us in his arms when we take our last view of our dead. Sitting down with us on the tombstone, and while we plant roses there, he planting consolation in our heart, every chapter a stalk, every verse a stem, every word a rose. A complete Savior, a complete Bible, a complete universe,

Again. I learn from this Jordanie passage that between us and every Cannan of success and prosperity there It is a very disagreeable duty; | is a river that must be passed. "Oh, how all the courage, I haven't the in-

a complete Jordanie passage. Every-

thing that God does is complete.

telligence to go through it." Advance ites to Joshua. "Well," says Joshua, "if you want the grapes why don't you cross over and get them?" There is a river of difficulty between us and everything that is worth having; that which costs nothing is worth nothing. God didn't intend this world for an easy parlor, through which we are to be drawn in a rocking-chair, but we are to work our passage, climb masts, fight battles, scale mountains and ford rivers. God makes everything valuable difficult to get at, for the same reason that he put the gold down in the mine, and the pearl clear down in the sea, to make us dig and dive for them. We acknowledge this principle in worldly things; ob, that we were only wise enough to acknowledge it in religious

You have scores of illustrations under your own observation where men have the hardest lot, and been trodden under foot, and yet after a while had it easy. Now their homes blossom and bloom with pictures, and carpets that made foreign looms laugh now embrace their feet; the summer winds lift the tapestry about the window gorgeous enough for a Tuckish Sultan: impatient steeds paw and neigh at the door, their earriages moving through the sea of New York life a very wave of splendor. Who is it? Why, it is a boy that came to New York with a caral beds, and flowers of beaven, and | dollar in his pocket, and all his estate slung ever his shoulder in a cotton handkerchief. All that silver on the dancing span is petrified sweat-drops: that beautiful dress is the faded calico over which God put his hand of perfection, turning it to Turkish satin or Italian silk; those diamonds are the tears which suffering froze as they fell. Oh, there is a river of difficulty between us and every earthly achievement. You know that. You admit that.

You know this is so with regard to the acquisition of knowledge. The ancients used to say that Vulcan struck Jupiter on the head and the goldess of wisdom jumped out, illustrating the truth that wisdom comes by hard snocks. There was a river of difficulty between Shakespeare, the boy holding the horses at the door of the London Theater, and that Shakespeare, the great dramatist, winning the applause of all audiences by his tragedies. There was a river between Benjamin Franklin, with a loaf of bread under his arm, walking the streets of Philadelphia, and that same Benjamin Franklin, the philosopher, just outside of Boston flying a kite in the thunderstorm. An idler was cured of his bad habit by fooking through his window, night after night, at a man who seemed sittiking at his desk turning off one sheet of writing after another, until almost the dawn of the morning. The man diding there writing until morning was industrious Walter Scott; the man who looked at him through the window was Lockart, his illustrious biographer afterward. Lord Mansfield, pursued by the press and by the populace, be- right to congratulate the people in cause of a certain line of duty, went New York that their friends had got on to discharge the duty: and the mob were around him demanding the taking of his life, he shook his hat in the face of the mob, and said, "Sirs, when one's last end comes? it cannot come too soon, if it falls in defence of law and the liberty of his country." And so there is, my friends, a tug a tussle, a trial, a push, an anxiety, through which every tian must go before he comes to worldly success and worldly achievement. You admit it. Now be wise enough to apply it in religion. Eminent Christian character is only gained by the Jordanic passage; no man just happened to get good.

Why does that man know so much sboat the Scriptures? He was studying the Bible while you were reading a novel. He was on fire with the sublimities of the Bible while you were sound asleep. By tug, tussel, pushing and running in the Christian life that man got so strong for God: in a hundred Solferinos he learned how to fight; in a hundred shipwreeks he learned how to swim. Tears over sin, tears over Zion's desolation, tears over the impenitent, tears over the graves made, are the Jordan which that man had passed. Sorrow pales the cheek, and fades the eye, and wrinkles the brow and withers the hands; there are mourning garments in the wardrobe, and there are deaths in every family record, all around are the relies of the dead.

The Christian has passed the Red Sea of trouble, and yet he thinks there is a Jordan of death, between him and heaven. He comes down to that Jordan of death, and thinks how many have been lost there. When Molyneux was exploring the Jordan in Palestine, he had his boats all knocked to pieces in the rapids of that river. And there are a great many men who have gone down in the river of death; the Atlantie and Pacific have not swallowed so many. It is an awful thing to make shipwrecks on the rock of ruin: masts falling, hurricanes flying, death coming, groanings in the water, moanings in the wind, thunder in the sky, while Got with the finger of the lightning writes all over the sky, "I will tread them in my wrath, and I will trample them in my fury."

The Christian comes down to this raging torrent, and he knows he must pass out; and as he comes toward the time, his breath gets shorter, and his last breath leaves him as he steps into the stream. and no somer does he

touch the stream than it is parted, and ke goes through dryshod, while all the waters wave their plumes, crying, "O death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?" God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more weeping, and there shall be no more death.

Some of your children have already gone up the other bank. You let them down on this side of the bank; they will be on the other bank to help you up with supernatural strength. The other morning at my table, all my family present, I thought to myself how pleasant it would be if I could put all into a boat, and then go in with them, and we could pull across the river to the next world, and be there all together. No it wouldn't take five minutes to go from bank to bank, and then in that better world to be together forever. Wouldn't it be pleasant for you to take all your family into that blessed country, if you could all go together? I remember my mother, in her dying hour, said to my father, "Father, wouldn't it be pleasant if we could all go together?" But we cannot all go together. We must go one by one, and we must be grateful if we get there at all. What a heaven it will be if we have all our families there, to look around and see all the children are present! You would rather have them all there, and you go with bare brow forever, than that one should be missing, to complete the garlands of heaven for your coronal. The Lord God of Joshua give them a safe Jordanie passage."

Even children will go through dryshod. Those of us who were brought up in the country remember, when the summer was coming on in our boyhood days, we always longed for the day when we were to go barefooted, and, after teasing our mothers in regard to it for a good while and they consented, we remember the delicious sensation of the cool grass when we put our uncovered foot on it. . And the time will come when these shoes we wear now. lest we be cut of the sharp places of this world, shall be taken off, and with unsandalled foot we will step into the bed of the river, with feet untrammelled, free from pain and fatigue, we will gain that last journey; when, with one foot in the bed of the river and the other foot on the other bank, we struggie upward. That will be Heaven. Oh. I pray for all my dear people a safe Jordanic passage. That is what the dying Christian husband felt when he said, "How the candle flickers, Nellie! Put it out: I shall sleep well to-night,

and wake in the morning.' Why was there so much joy in certain circles in New York when people heard from the friends who were on board that belated steamer. It was feared that vessel had gone to the bottom of the sea; and when the friends on this side heard that the steamer had arrived safely in Liverpool, had we not a while safely across? And is it not right this. morning that I congratulate you that. your departed friends are safe, on the shore of heaven? Would you have them back again? Would you have those old parents back again? You know how hard it was sometimes for them to get their breath in the stifled atmosphere of the summer; would you have them back in this weather? Didn't they dee their brain long enough? Would you have your children back again? Would you have them take the risk of temptations which throng every human pathway? Would you have them cross the Jordan three times? In addition to crossing it already, cross it again to greet you now, and then cross back afterward. For certainly you would not want to keep them forever out of

heaven. Pause and weep, not for the freed from pain. The b But that the sigh of love would bring them back again.

I ask a question, and there seems to come back the answer in heavenly echo. "What! will you never be sick again?" "Never-sick-again." What! will you never be tired again?" "Nevertired-again." What! will you never weep again?" "Never-weep-again." "What! will you never die again?" "Never-die-again." Oh, ye army of departed kindred, we hail you from bank to bank. Wait for us when the Jordan of death shall part for us. Come down and meet us half-way between the willowed banks of earth and the palm groves of heaven. May our great High Priest go ahead of us, and with bruised feet touch the water, and then shall be fulfilled the words of my text, "All Israel went over on dry ground, until all the people were gone clear through Jordan.

If I ask you what shall be the glad hymn of this morning, I think there would be a thousand voices that would choose the same hymn-the hymn that illumines so many death-chambers: the hymn that has been the parting hymn in many an instance-the old

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand And cast a wistful eve To Canaan's fair and happy land, Where my possessions lie.

Oh, the transporting, rapturous scene.

That rises on my sight! Sweet fields arrayed in living green. And rivers of delight.

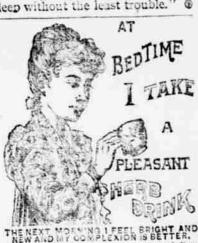
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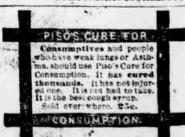
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